




**B. J. Walker, Commissioner**

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May 16, 2008

**SOCIAL SERVICES MANUAL TRANSMITTAL NO. 2008-05**

**TO:** County Departments of Family and Children Services (DFCS)  
DFCS Regional Directors  
State Staff

**FROM:** David Statton, Interim Director 

**RE:** Foster Care Services Manual Revisions:  
Section 1004 Placement Resources

**PURPOSE**

Research has determined that children thrive best in their families. For many years it has been the practice of relatives to parent related children when the children's parents cannot. When children enter foster care, individuals related to the child (blood, marriage or adoption) are considered first over a non related individual as a placement resource for the child. Preserving relationships with family members is crucial to a child's sense of safety and well-being. The Department is committed to advocating and implementing a stronger partnership with extended family to better serve the needs of children who are placed in foster care. It is the Department's preference that all relatives are approved as resource parents and receive a foster care per diem. The goal of relatives becoming foster parents is to ensure that the child has appropriate services to address his/her needs. Supportive services are provided to the family with the intent of establishing and achieving a permanency plan for the child.

Manual Transmittal 2008-05 introduces the changes in policy and procedures for encouraging relatives to become foster parents.

## **DISCUSSTION**

The following changes are highlighted:

- Relatives are **encouraged** to become foster parents.
- Relatives may receive the Enhanced Relative Rate until they are approved as a foster parent.
- If The relative expresses an interest in becoming a foster parent, the relative must be approved as a foster parent within 180 days of the child's placement in their home.
- Support services are presented to relative caregivers prior to the placement of the child in the home.
- Relatives are engaged in permanency planning for children placed in their home.

## **IMPLEMENTATION:**

This manual material is effective upon receipt.

Questions should be directed to the Field Program Specialist in the region. Regional staff may direct questions to Leslie Cofield at [lbcofield@dhr.state.ga.us](mailto:lbcofield@dhr.state.ga.us).

## **INSTRUCTIONS FOR POLICY MANUAL MAINTENANCE:**

1. Remove Section 1004 Placement Resources from your Social Services Foster Care Manual.
2. Print a copy of the Revised (May 2008) Section 1004 Placement Resources from the Online Directives Information System (ODIS) at:  
[http://www.odis.dhr.state.ga.us/3000\\_fam/3060\\_fostercare/fostercare.htm](http://www.odis.dhr.state.ga.us/3000_fam/3060_fostercare/fostercare.htm).
3. Insert the Revised (May 2008) Section 1004 Placement Resources in the Foster Care Manual.
4. Make the proper notation on the Receipt of Manual Transmittals.